

VIA: AIR
(SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH)

~~RYBAT~~

Lincoln
DISPATCH NO. HGG-A-673

~~SECRET~~
Security Information
CLASSIFICATION

TO : Chief, Lincoln

DATE: 1 JAN 27 1954

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala []

INFO: Chief, WHD

SUBJECT: GENERAL—

PBSUCCESS

SPECIFIC—

Subject of SQUAT 934, 935 and of DIR 31494

Reference -

- (a) HGG-A-675
- (b) HGG-A-676
- (c) HGG-A-677

1. Enclosed is a memorandum dated 18 January 1954 entitled "Summary of a Production Plan for a 35mm Film of Guatemala Today."
2. This memorandum was prepared by Identity A of reference (a) at the request of Identity B of reference (a).
3. Transmitted under separate cover for Lincoln only (reference (b) is a dossier on Identity A and a copy of the letter from Guillermo PALMIERI mentioned on page 2 of the enclosure to this dispatch.
4. Also transmitted under separate cover (reference (c) is the limited identifying data available to us on Identity C.

[]
George L. Tranger

22 January 1954

Enclosures: as noted

Distribution:

- 2 - Lincoln w/1 encl
- 3 - Washington w/1 encl
- 1 - Files w/1 encl

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

2003

RYBAT

FORM NO. 51-28A
MAR. 1949

~~SECRET~~
Security Information

9
1 JAN 29 1954

P-3-1

January 18, 1954

To: [REDACTED] IDENTITY B
From: [REDACTED] IDENTITY A

Subject: Summary of a Production Plan for a 35mm Film of Guatemala Today.

This summary will confirm our discussion of this afternoon and in brief outline the various points associated with the production of a thirty minute, 35mm, black and white film with sound, which will through the use of documentary pictures, filmed on the spot, show how communism was able to establish itself in Guatemala, what its present functions are, and how through its present plan of operations how communism expects to maintain its position in Guatemala in the future.

As yet, in no other country in the world, has the situation been so clear-cut and obvious as it is here in Guatemala. The opportunity of gathering a film record of the communist system driving a wedge into Central America through Guatemala has never been more promising. The general population of Guatemala, knowingly and also unknowingly, has been slowly becoming a part of that system. The story of how that could happen is well defined and exists in simplified form sufficient for good picture material. Since Guatemala has several distinct cultures of people ranging from the lowland mixed groups of agriculturists, to Guatemala City's educated classes, the government politicians, and the Indian populations, the various steps and procedures necessary for the communists to gain the support of these varied groups covers the whole scheme of their propaganda measures as practiced in Europe, Asia and even in the United States. Essentially a small country, it offers the advantage of a compact story unique in the fact that the film coverage will be greatly simplified, free from the many confusing items which would be found if telling a story such as this about any other country in the world.

PURPOSE: To represent on film how a country and its people can turn to communist ways. In establishing Guatemala's physical characteristics, its people, the natural resources, industries, general economy, cities, roads, schools, social and cultural activities, its international position, the government, army, airforce, police force, and the historic background, it is hoped that audiences will have a firm foundation to then judge Guatemala and its turn to communism. Within this living structure will be woven the intimate personal life of the various groups of people. The communist systems can then be analysed and clearly shown in their relationship to each group. The final film should in simplified form pictorially explain and prove how a country like Guatemala could wake up one morning and discover that it was completely communistic, and under its complete control and dictates. Since primitive people as well as educated Guatemalans are represented in the film, audiences of Asia as well as in the United States will be able to see the many manifestations of communism in action. The point will be suggested that if it could happen here, why not throughout all of Central America. Most important, the film will make every effort of showing the many ways in which the communist system and control creeps into an unsuspecting country.

HOW THIS CAN BE DONE: As I see it, the success of such a venture would depend on the cooperation of the various political parties and even of the government itself. Naturally, they will not give such cooperation in this case unless they do so without knowing it. My position at the moment seems quite sound. My entry and main reason for being here is to complete part of an assignment for the American Museum of Natural History, in New York. Since the work is not political there is no question about my activities. This assignment permits me to work freely in the Indian areas. In anticipation of this present picture I requested cooperation from the Tourist Bureau, Mr. P. Guillemo

Palmieri, who is also one of the main figures in the PRG party. His reply is attached herewith. A Mr Clarence Smith was assigned to work with me. Together we went to San Juan Atitan and completed the first part of the Museum's assignment. It is now clearly understood by everyone that it will be necessary for me to visit four Indian areas to complete the Museum's work. Those four areas will also give me sufficient material to show the political infiltration being done by the party systems in the Indian areas. To get the Army side of the picture, I have started negotiations to do a series of training films for the Guatemalan army. The response has been favorable, but in view of the fact that I am not yet sure of this present plan, I could not take it too far. Smith's wife has friends close to the President's wife, has made initial overtures for film assignments from the President's wife. Since she has high hopes of becoming another Eva Peron, this possibility looks very promising. Palmieri has expressed interest in the making of a party film which if it comes off will give me the valuable coverage that could not be gotten in any other way. All film will be sent to the United States for processing, and the negatives as well as the prints will be in my complete control. Since the pictures that I would agree to do for them would not be normal business transactions I would offer them at extremely low figures in order to assure getting them. Special effort has been made to establish the fact that I need money and the work badly. My qualifications are sound and they may consider that they are getting a buy. As for the general coverage of the country, without politics, I see no problem there. The angle of tourism and promoting interest in the United States will get all the cooperation I need.

DISTRIBUTION: It would be impossible at this time to guarantee any definite form of distribution. However, through friends of mine with whom I have worked many years such as Louis de Rochemont, the proper contacts can be made when the picture is completed. Since the Press has been hitting the Central and Latin American communist infiltration plan rather regularly the interest should be such as to aid distribution. Both theater and television showing can be arranged, if not through the regular paying channels, then through the for-free system. A film such as this, well done, should be a credit to any sponsor or distributor. My main concern is not the distribution but the intelligent presentation of the situation here in Guatemala. Once that is achieved, the distribution is automatic.

Note: If interest in such a film as this is seriously shown, I would appreciate greatly the opportunity of talking with the people most concerned. Directives and objectives which they desire must be clearly understood before production begins. Also, since a polished final script is a necessity, I would like to bring [REDACTED] down here to Guatemala as a tourist where he could develop his material from first hand information. To do this, I feel I should return to the United States for a quick trip, get additional equipment which this job would require, and have the entire situation well ironed out in advance.

IDENTITY "C"

Respectfully yours,
[REDACTED]

IDENTITY A